

Women and Gender

Project Catalogue

Per March 2010

Women's Rights and Gender Equality

1 Governance, Justice and Gender in Afghanistan: Between Informal and Formal Dynamics

Prosjektansvarlig:

Chr. Michelsens Institutt

Prosjektleder:

Suhrke, Astri Forskningsleder

Prosjektnr: 199437/S50

Bevilgningsperiode og finansiering fra Norges forskningsråd:

1.1.2010-31.12.2012

2010: **1,156,000** 2011: **1,185,000** 2012: **558,000**

To examine the women's participation in formal and informal processes of local politics of Afghanistan

To examine state intervention in cases of violence against women

To significantly strengthen research on gender and female research capacity in Afghanistan, to formalise research cooperation between CMI and its Afghan partner CPAU and strengthen the gender dimension of the research of both institutions

The proposed project will examine two aspects of gender relations in Afghanistan; (i) the role of women in processes of local governance, and ii) state intervention in cases of violence against women. The project will take the form of an institutional collaboration between the Chr. Michelsen Institute (Bergen) and the Cooperation for Peace and Unity (Kabul), thereby adding significant capacity in this area at both institutions.

The project period is December 2009 to December 2012.

2 Human rights and gender dimensions of water governance in Africa: Actors, norms and institutions

Prosjektansvarlig:

Det juridiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo

Prosjektleder:

Hellum, Anne Professor

Prosjektnr: 199473/S50

Bevilgningsperiode og finansiering fra Norges forskningsråd:

1.7.2010-30.6.2013

2010: **437,000** 2011: **1,671,000** 2012: **1,060,000**
2013: **431,000**

The primary aim of the project is to contribute to the development of a human rights based framework for water governance pertaining to women's rights as water users and decision makers. Exploring interaction between international, national and local norms the aim is to lay a foundation for a rights based framework responding to two concerns: 1) gendered water needs, uses and norms and 2) gendered perceptions of women as decision makers and right holders. A related aim is to consider appropriate measures to implement the right to water and the right to participation in a way that strengthens women's formally and locally defined rights.

The secondary objective is to translate these interrelated dimensions of a rights based approach for gender equal water governance into strategies that are nationally and locally appropriate in each of the four countries, South Africa, Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe. This includes dissemination of information on the right to water.

Democratization, good governance, sustainable use and broadened access to resources are concerns that have informed land and water reforms in Africa. Despite frequent references to rights-based approaches to development in general, empirical research identify a lacking appreciation of women's water needs and uses and their right to have a say in institutions governing access. The aim of the project is to lay an empirical and legal foundation for appropriate frameworks and strategies for inclusion of the human rights and gender equality dimension in water governance. It combines empirical research of water uses and management on the ground with the study of laws and policies developed at international and national level in four African countries. Within an interdisciplinary framework it seeks an understanding of the outcome of water governance processes with a view to how human rights are defined, mobilized, transformed or resisted by different actors, such as governments, donors and NGO's. A key question is whether and under what conditions decentralized water governance systems facilitates the inclusion and protection of women's water rights. Cases from Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe sheds light on these processes through the lens of women's participation as both a tool to ensure that gendered uses of water are considered, and as part of the overall right to participation in decision-making. The research teams will collect and synthesize field-evidence on three related themes: the gendered nature of access to and use of water, the effects of women's participation towards including these in decision/policy-making, and the conditions for women's participation in local institutions. The case studies will reflect how women negotiate their position as water users and decision makers under differing political and legal contexts, the degree of government commitment through incorporation of human rights, scale of donor influence, strength of women's organizations.

3 Mobile Livelihoods and Gendered Citizenship: the Counter-Geographies of Indigenous People in India, China and Laos.

Prosjektansvarlig:

Det historisk-filosofiske fakultet, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet

Prosjektleder:

Lund, Ragnhild Professor

Prosjektnr: 199514/S50

Bevilgningsperiode og finansiering fra Norges forskningsråd:

1.1.2010-31.12.2012

2010: **812,000** 2011: **715,000** 2012: **429,000**

The overall objective of this research is to study the gendered dimensions of increasing connectivity and mobility among indigenous men and women in India, China and Laos.

Secondary objectives are:

To identify the dynamic changes that the indigenous women and men are facing with rapid infrastructure improvement and commercialization/ industrialization in their places of livelihoods.

To examine how state policies and cross-border/cross-regional connectivities shape and redefine mobile livelihoods patterns, the rights and citizenship, identities and gender relations of indigenous women and men.

Indigenous people have been increasingly portrayed as marginalized victims with no rights. However, there has been little emphasis on their lived realities, namely how they strategize to survive on a day to day basis. Mobility is becoming a major coping strategy, and the implications of mobile livelihoods are different for women and men. Such mobility may be seen as direct impacts of increasing geographical connectivity as well as increasing external influence, often manifested through neo-liberalist policies as enacted by majority population groups.

Principal researchers from four partner institutions in India, China, Thailand and Norway have come together to study the gendered dimensions of such increasing connectivities and mobility among indigenous women and men. Such a project allows us to understand the dynamic changes that they are facing with rapid infrastructure improvement and commercialization/industrialization in their places of livelihoods. Hence, how state policies and cross-border/cross-regional connectivities shape and redefine mobile livelihoods patterns, the rights and citizenship, identities and gender relations of indigenous women and men, constitute the focus of the study.

Most research on indigenous people has been ethnographic case studies. This study seeks to compare

indigenous people in three countries - India, China and Laos - which are rapidly being exposed to structural adjustments, neo-liberalist policies and reform. Both qualitative (participatory workshops, ethnographic fieldwork) and quantitative methods (surveys) will be used in this study. The outcome of this study will be articles in internationally refereed journals, a book: "Gendered Livelihoods and Mobilities" (preliminary title), master theses, and curriculum development in the respective institutions.

4 The Significance of Political Organization and International Law for Displaced Women in Colombia: A Socio-legal study of Liga De Mujeres

Prosjektansvarlig:

Institutt for fredsforskning, PRIO

Prosjektleder:

Sandvik, Kristin Bergtora

Prosjektnr: 199635/S50

Bevilgningsperiode og finansiering fra Norges forskningsråd:

1.4.2010-31.3.2013

2010: **864,000** 2011: **734,000** 2012: **802,000**

Through a case study of the Colombian grassroots organization Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas, the project aims to ascertain the importance of political mobilization and organization for the protection of the human security of internally displaced women. Contemporary research on displacement predominantly focuses on the economic, social and legal challenges, and pays little attention to processes of political organizing and human rights claiming. Based on ethnographic methods and a survey developed through a feminist, collaborative approach with activists from the Liga, this study will provide Colombian decision makers and international actors engaged in work with IDPs with new insights into the role of displaced women in building institutions and contributing to societal security during ongoing social and political conflict, as well as offering a critical assessment of the international community's emphasis on human rights discourse, domestic legalization processes and litigation.

At 4.6 million, Colombia hosts the world's second largest population of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The reasons for this massive displacement include guerilla and paramilitary activity, drug trade and land grabbing. Frequently seen as participants or collaborators in these conflicts, IDPs are endowed with suspect political identities. Preexisting socioeconomic and political conditions exacerbate the marginalization of displaced women. In recent years, international actors and academics have put great emphasis on legalization strategies, particularly through the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. In Colombia, the

progressive Law 387 from 1997 provides a comprehensive framework for implementing IDP rights. In addition, the Colombian Constitutional Court advocates actively for IDPs. However, these top-down oriented efforts have had limited impact on the situation on the ground. Using ethnographic and participatory research methods, and drawing on feminist legal scholarship, the project's main focus will be an in-depth case study of La Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas, a grassroots organization of displaced women in and around Cartagena in northern Colombia. The Liga runs a large housing project, undertakes consciousness raising efforts, and is engaged in litigation and municipal politics. As a result of their activism, its members also face grave security risks. The case study explores three main questions: to what extent are political organization and the re-creation of social and political identities necessary for securing the protection of the human security of displaced women, and improving societal security more generally? How can knowledge about the role of political organization be reflected in the international community with respect to human rights discourse, domestic legalization processes and litigation as modes of improving the IDP situation? How can we develop a gender-sensitive methodology for studying internally displaced women?

5 Women and Law in Latin America: Justice, Security and Legal Pluralism

Prosjektansvarlig:

Chr. Michelsens Institutt

Prosjektleder:

Sieder, Rachel

Prosjektnr: 199745/S50

Bevilgningsperiode og finansiering fra Norges forskningsråd:

1.1.2010-31.12.2012

2010: **1,100,000** 2011: **1,295,000** 2012: **905,000**

The primary objective of the project is to explore the relationship between legal pluralism, and indigenous women's access to justice and security in Latin America.

The secondary objectives of the project are

- to study the efficacy of organized social movements' strategies for securing greater gender justice in the context of the struggle for recognition of indigenous peoples' collective rights
- to examine indigenous social movements' strategies for increasing access to justice and security, with a particular focus on the gendered dimensions of these processes
- to consider the extent to which situations of complex legal plurality can favour or disadvantage possibilities for greater gender justice, and specifically for women's access to justice and security.

There has been a wealth of new research on complex legal pluralism in Latin America, much of it linked to recent

multicultural reforms which recognise the right of indigenous communities to exercise their own forms of law (part of the regional turn Van Cott has termed multicultural constitutionalism). In addition, the issues of security and access to justice in Latin America have become a hot topic, both for donors and academics. However, surprisingly little of this research on legal pluralism has focused on the gendered dimensions of law and women's access to justice and security.

Through a combination of desk-based study and qualitative, collaborative research in a number of countries in Latin America, this project will analyze the strategies adopted by indigenous social movements, and particularly by organized indigenous women to secure greater gender justice within contexts of complex legal pluralism. Through a range of specific, grounded studies focused on and in collaboration with particular social movements it will explore how contemporary legal pluralism affects gender justice and specifically women's access to justice and security.

Our proposed research perspective involves engaging with a normative human rights framework with a descriptive analysis of its interaction with official and unofficial national and local norms in different contexts. We propose that such a relational and contextual gender perspective can help reveal the complex, ambiguous and often contentious relationship between human rights, access to justice and security, gender, and legal pluralism. Our focus is on the relationship between formal and informal norms and institutions and shifting practices and their outcomes. Such an approach necessarily involves analysis of the ways in which social actors understand, reframe, appropriate and use human rights and alternative legal orders in order to improve their well-being. The project seeks to adopt an interdisciplinary approach.